Select Committee composed of Messrs. Krishnaswamy Rao, Rama Vurma, Kuruvila and the mover and that it be published in the Gazette.

Seconded by Mr. Nagam Aiya.

Carried.

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REGULATION AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. Krishnaswamy Rao.—

I beg leave to introduce a Bill for the amendment of Regulation II of 1063 which now regulates the constitution of this Council. The chief defect in the present law is that it does not define the powers of the Council. Owing to the peculiar political conditions of this State, it is not possible for the local legislature to enact laws affecting several matters coming within the sphere of the imperial policy of the paramount power, such as customs and salt duties, treatment of European vagrants, extradition of criminals, Sea ports, British Post office and Telegraphs and the like. To remove the doubts which may arise as to the legality of the orders of the executive in relation to such matters, it is necessary to exclude them from the jurisdiction of the Council. The main object of this Bill is to define the powers of the Council.

I have taken this opportunity to introduce some other amendments suggested by the Indian Councils Act of 1892 which regulates the constitution of the Legislative Councils in India. Travancore does not differ materially from British India in point of education, intelligence and civilization of its inhabitants. The success which the Act of 1892 has achieved in British India warrants the adoption of some system of election here in the nomination of all or a few of the non-official members.

The maximum strength of the Council now is 9 members including the President. An increase in the number of councillors may secure a better representation of all interests in the country. The Legislative Council of Ceylon consists of 15 members exclusive of the Governor, the Viceregal Council 21, and the Provincial Councils of Bombay and Madras 24 each. Travancore is very nearly equal to Ceylon in area and population. I think that a Council of 15 members for Travancore will not be unwieldy.

The Bill which I seek to introduce is sketched on the main lines above indicated. I need not take up the time of the Council by an exposition of the other matters dealt with in the Bill as they do not materially differ from the existing law.

Seconded by Mr. Thanu Pillai.

Carried.

Leave having been granted he introduced the Bill and moved that the Bill with statement of Objects and Reasons be published in the Gazette.

Seconded by Mr. Prince.

Carried.

PENAL CODE BILL.

Mr. Krishnaswamy Rao.—

I beg that the Penal Code Bill as amended by the Select Committee be taken into consideration. It was published in the Travancore Gazette of the 10th March last. I think that it has been sufficiently long before the public. It is very gratifying to note that this Bill has been more carefully studied by the public and the press than any other legislative measure introduced into this Council. The thanks of the Council are due to the gentlemen who have favoured us with their criticisms and suggestions. They will be glad to find that some of their suggestions have been adopted by the Council. I intend to make a few general observations on some of the important criticisms and suggestions.

Exception is taken to section 85 of the Bill on the ground that it is superfluous. It may be that no sensible Magistrate will punish a schoolmaster for correcting a pupil by the application of the cane in the usual way. But we should not forget that the absence of a clear provision on the point often misleads the pupil or his advisers into the erroneous belief that a prosecution for assault will be successful.

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